

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1981

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to after-school programs.

Brief Description: Creating the Washington community learning center program.

Sponsors: Representatives McDermott, Hasegawa and Santos.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/24/05, 3/1/05 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Washington Community Learning Center program to support after-school tutoring and educational enrichment for students.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; P. Sullivan, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Haigh, Hunter, McDermott, Santos, Shabro and Tom.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

During 2004, the Washington Afterschool Network and School's Out Washington drafted a plan intended to help students succeed in school and life through increased and improved after-school programs. The two organizations were assisted by staff from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Division of Childcare and Early Learning in the Department of Social and Health Services.

The two organizations sought advice from a variety of different groups involved in afterschool programs through surveys and 23 focus groups that were held in communities throughout the state. Four focus groups sought advice from over 100 middle and high school students.

The plan created through this process recommends that the Legislature appropriate an additional \$5,000,000 during the next biennium for after-school programs. The funds would create 50 additional after-school programs serving 9,000 students. It would also provide training and professional development for after-school program staff, support after-school intermediary organizations, and increase public awareness of the benefits of after-school programs.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington Community Learning Center program is established. The program will be administered by the OSPI. The program has four purposes, one of which is the support or expansion of community learning centers that provide students with after-school tutoring and educational enrichment. Other purposes include training and professional development for community learning center staff, support for statewide after-school intermediary organizations, and increasing public awareness of the availability and benefits of after-school programs.

To the extent that funding is available, the OSPI may provide grants to organizations that meet the eligibility criteria of the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. A priority will be given to grant requests that focus on improving the reading and mathematics skills of students in Title I schools that have been identified as being in need of improvement. A priority may be given to requests that are submitted jointly by school districts with non-school partners. The grants may be used to carry out a broad array of activities that support and enhance academic achievement. A list of activities is included.

The sum of \$5,000,000, divided equally between both years of the biennium, is appropriated to the OSPI to support the program.

Appropriation: The sum of \$5,000,000 for the program for the 2005-07 biennium.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect August 1, 2005.

Testimony For: This legislation is the result of six months of work by the members of the after-school coalition. It will help expand the number and enhance the quality of after-school programs available around the state. It will also help to sustain current programs that are threatened with the loss of federal grant funds. Good after-school programs enrich students' lives and support their educational achievement. Research has shown that good after-school programs also reduce crime and truancy. In some communities, for example communities too small to support a Young Men's Christian Association or a Young Women's Christian Association, they are the only option that students have for organized activities after school. These programs also help build communities. The grants included in the legislation will help create partnerships and will leverage additional funding from other sources.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Representative McDermott, prime sponsor; Janet Frieling, Washington Afterschool Network; Racie McKee, Omak School District; Jonelle Adams, Washington Alliance for Better Schools; Sara Tenney Espinosa, Seattle Public Schools; and Greg Williamson and Joan Yoshitomi, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.